

Message Text

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ACTION COME-00

INFO OCT-01 EA-09 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 EB-07 FRB-01

INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-15 TRSE-00 XMB-04 OPIC-06

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1938

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

UNCLAS BANGKOK 10049

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BENC, BEXP, TH

SUBJ: MAJOR PROJECT FOLLOW-UP; MINBURI INDUSTRIAL ESTATE AND EXPORT
PROCESSING ZONE

REF: A) 76 BANGKOK 26016, B) 76 BANGKOK A-35

1. ON MAY 4, EMBOFF CALLED ON MR. CHAMROON VAJRABHAYA, DIRECTOR, INDUSTRIAL ESTATE AUTHORITY OF THAILAND (IEAT) TO ASK ABOUT THE CURRENT STATUS OF IEAT'S VARIOUS PROJECTS. CHAMROON ADMITTED THAT IEAT HAD MADE SLOW PROGRESS DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, BUT THAT IT HAD FINALLY BEGUN TO MOVE AHEAD, PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO ITS MINBURI ESTATE PROJECT. SEVERAL OTHER PROJECTS, SUCH AS THE BANG POO INDUSTRIAL ESTATE IN SAMUT PRAKARN (A SUBURB TO THE EAST OF BANGKOK) AND THE NAVA NAKORN SATELLITE TOWN AND INDUSTRIAL ESTATE IN PATHUM THANI (BEYOND DON MUANG AIRPORT), ARE UNDERWAY BUT THESE ARE BOTH JOINT VENTURES BETWEEN IEAT AND PRIVATE FIRMS. AS PART OF THAILAND' FOURTH FIVE YEAR PLAN (1976-1981), THE AUTHORITY HAS PLANNED FOR FIVE MORE INDUSTRIAL ESTATES IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE COUNTRY BUT THESE PROJECTS ARE STILL UNDER CONSIDERATION.

2. THE MINBURI ESTATE IS LOCATED ABOUT TEN KILOMETERS NORTH OF
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BANGKOK IN A SUBURBAN DISTRICT OF THE SAME NAME CLOSE TO THE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT. IEAT HAS ALREADY PURCHASED THE 400 ACRE SITE AND SOON WILL HIRE A CONTRACTOR TO BEGIN PREPARING THE LAND FOR DEVELOPMENT. THE PROJECT IS DIVIDED INTO TWO STAGES, EACH TO TAKE ABOUT ONE AND A HALF YEARS. WITHIN THE AREA, A 50 ACRE EXPORT PROCESSING ZONE (EPZ) TO CONTAIN 80-100 FACTORIES IS PLANNED. THAILAND'S FIRST EPZ, MODELED AFTER

THOSE ON TAIWAN, WILL BE DESIGNED TO ATTRACT LABOR INTENSIVE INDUSTRIES SUCH AS ELECTRONICS AND OTHER PRECISION ASSEMBLY OPERATIONS.

3. MR. CHAMROON WILL VISIT WORLD BANK IN WASHINGTON DURING JUNE TO NEGOTIATE A SIX TO SEVEN MILLION DOLLAR LOAN (APPROXIMATELY ONE HALF OF THE TOTAL COST, \$12.5 MILLION). HE ALSO WILL PRESENT THE FOUR BEST PROPOSALS OUT OF THE NINE SUBMITTED ON MARCH 15 TO DO THE OVERALL DESIGN AND SUPERVISION. ALL EXCEPT ONE (100 PER CENT THAI) ARE JOINT VENTURES BETWEEN FOREIGN AND THAI FIRMS. ONE OF THE CONDITIONS FOR SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL WAS THAT A FOREIGN FIRM MUST HAVE A THAI PARTNER. THERE ARE THREE U.S. FIRMS (SVERDRUP & PARCEL, LOUIS BERGER AND DE LEUW CATHER), TWO FROM THE U.S. (JD&DM WATSON, MOTT HAY&ANDERSON) AND ONE EACH FROM DENMARK (COWICONSLT), HONG KONG (BINNIE & PARTNERS) AND SWITZERLAND (SOCIETE GENERAL POUR L'INDUSTRIE). IEAT EXPECTS THAT THE WINNING FIRM TO BEGIN WORK BEFORE THE END OF THIS FISCAL YEAR AND THAT THE SITE, BOTH THE EPZ AND PART OF THE NON-EPZ AREA, WILL BE READY FOR INVESTORS BY EARLY 1979.

4. POTENTIAL INVESTORS MAY WRITE FOR MORE INFORMATION TO:
MR. CHAMROON VAJRABHAYA
DIRECTOR
INDUSTRIAL ESTATE AUTHORITY OF THAILAND
KLUAY NAM THAI ROAD
BANGKOK, THAILAND
WHITEHOUSE

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